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and simple scheme of the natural sciences, which I have endeavored to set forth in the subjoined table :

NATURAL SCIENCES.	INORGANIC NATURE	ORGANIC NATURE.
DESCRIPTIVE. General Physiography or Natural History.	MINERAL PHYSIOGRAPHY. Descriptive and Systematic Mineralogy; Geognosy; Geography; Descriptive Astronomy.	BIOPHYSIOGRAPHY. Organography; Descriptive and Systematic Botany and Zoölogy.
PHILOSOPHICAL. General Physiology or Natural Philosophy.	MINERAL PHYSIOLOGY. <i>Dynamics or Physics:</i> <i>Chemistry.</i> Geogeny; Theoretical Astronomy.	BIOPHYSIOLOGY. <i>Biotics.</i> Organogeny; Morphology; Physiological Botany and Zoölogy.

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EDITORS' TABLE.

EDITORS: A. S. PACKARD, JR., AND E. D. COPE.

— Without doubt a most serious objection to the study of natural history, in the minds of young people and also older amateurs, is the technical language used by specialists. Nomenclature, botanical and zoölogical, is the *pons asinorum* of those who are not always dull in intellect, or who have even a smattering of Latin and Greek. Technical words, however, are necessary for brevity and conciseness of expression, and for use in a polyglot science.

Changes in nomenclature are also a great evil, vexing the amateur mind most sorely. But by the application of the law of priority and holding specialists to binomial names, we shall after awhile arrive at a reasonable amount of uniformity. The late Professor Wyman abominated excessive nomenclature, and used to declare his belief that specific and generic names should be abolished and species, at least, numbered 1, 2, 3, etc.

But now comes a new source of vexation to the lay biologist. We refer to the use of lower-case initials in writing the generic name, either alone or coupled with the specific name, with an initial in lower-case type. While certain ornithologists are to be condemned for using a cumbersome trinomial nomenclature, certain entomologists and editors adopt the usage of librarians and bibliomaniacs and write *Turdus migratorius*, *turdus migratorius*. We have of late years, for the sake of uniformity with English and German writers (though much against our will), written specific names derived from proper names in lower-case initials, and

so they are and have been for some years printed in this magazine, although we should prefer to follow the rules of English grammar, and the usage of botanists.

The latest abomination is that practiced by some entomologists in lists and catalogues, who begin all specific names with a capital. Now in the name of Linnæus and Lindley Murray combined, let us pause here. No well educated and sane person writes *john smith's Book* or *john Smith's Book*, but *John Smith's book*.

Can any one give us any good reason for not following the ordinary usage and writing the name of our common butterfly *Papilio Turnus*, the specific name being a proper one, rather than *papilio turnus* or *papilio Turnus*? or worst of all write the scientific name of the robin *Turdus Migratorius*.

Nomenclatural excesses or absurdities, trivial technicalities, in season and out of season, are the bane of modern biology, and we are glad that a natural disgust for these disagreeable concomitants of the study of living nature, tends to lead enthusiastic naturalists to eschew systematic biology, dried plants, dried skins and dried beetles, and to seek the woods and fields and observe the habits and instincts of living animals, or to undertake the more difficult and disciplinary anatomical and embryological fields of research.

Another argument is the increasing attention to be given hereafter in public schools to the study of biology. Botanists and zoölogists who write text books should bear in mind that a uniform nomenclature is of particular importance. Confusion and disgust should not result from the study of nature. What theologians are pleased to call the "natural" man rightfully rebels against an overstrung nomenclature. The biologico-pedagogical pill should be sugar-coated, or at least have no projecting angles.

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RECENT LITERATURE.

WEISMANN'S STUDIES IN THE THEORY OF DESCENT.¹—Next to the works of Darwin, Wallace and Fritz Müller, the present essay of Weismann's, which appeared in Germany several years since, is perhaps the most important contribution to the doctrine of evolution, and its appearance in an English dress, revised and annotated, should cause it to be widely read. The author's object was both philosophical and purely scientific. Besides endeavoring to test the capabilities of the known factors of transformation, the author discusses a question of wider importance,

¹ *Studies in the Theory of Descent*. By Dr. AUGUST WEISMANN. With notes and additions by the author. Translated and edited, with notes, by RAPHAEL MELDOLA. With a prefatory notice by CHARLES DARWIN. In 2 vols., with 8 colored plates. London, Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1882. 8vo, pp. 729.